

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LODGE

1. THIS IS IN REPLY TO YOUR STATE 170345 THAT I GIVE YOU MY "CURRENT JUDGMENT" ON THE MERIT OF SEEKING TO "PERSUADE" THIEU AND KY TO OPEN UIET CHANNELS TO NLF/VC, OFFERING CERTAIN INDUCEMENTS LISTED IN YOUR PARAGRAPHS SA, B, AND C.

2. MY BEST JUDGMENT IS THAT THIS TYPE OF THING IS PREMATURE AND THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY BE INTERPRETED BY BOTH HANOI AND SAIGON AS OVER-EAGERNESS ON OUR PART. IF REVEALED, IT WOULD TEND TO MAKE US LOOK WEAK IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD AND TO CONFIRM CERTAIN FEARS IN GVN CIRCLES THAT OUR OBJECTIVE IS A

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 22406 S E C R E T
"SHOTGUN" MARRIAGE. MY JUDGMENT WOULD, THEREFORE, BE AGAINST DOING IT NOW.

3. MY COMMENT ON YOUR SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. YOUR PARAGRAPH 3A: I CAN SEE NO INTRINSIC OBJECTION TO PLACING INDIVIDUALS WHO HAPPEN TO HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF THE NLF AND WHO SINCERELY WANT TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF INTO POSITIONS OF THE TYPE NOW HELD, FOR EXAMPLE, BY GENERAL QUANG AS MINISTER OF PLANNING. BUT FOR VIET-NAM TO TAKE A HARD CORE, PROFESSIONAL TERRORIST AND MAKE HIM MINISTER OF INTERIOR WOULD BE TO COMMIT SUICIDE. IN OTHER WORDS, IT WOULD DEPEND ON WHO IT IS AND WHAT THE POSITION IS. ALL SORTS OF ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE WORKED OUT WHICH WOULD ADMIN INDIVIDUAL, FORMER NLF MEMBERS WHO TRULY WANT TO JOIN THE GVN. THE POINT WHICH I AM SURE THE GRN THINKS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPROMISE ON IS ADMITTING THE NLF AS SUCH --

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY *Joan Igenberg* DATE 10/5/81RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

TS AUTH. REASON (C)

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SECRET

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AS AN ORGANIZATION OR AS AN ENTITY. THEY THINK THAT THIS IS DEFEAT FOR THE NATION AND DEATH FOR THEM PERSONALLY AND I MUST SAY THAT I FIND IT VERY HARD TO PROVE THEM WRONG.

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 22406 S E C R E T

B. IN REPLY TO YOUR 3B, UNDER ARTICLE 13(2) OF THE CONSTITUTION EVERY CITIZEN IS FREE TO RUN FOR OFFICE. THIS AGAIN WOULD COVER NLF MEMBERS WHO HAVE CLEARLY TURNED OVER A NEW LEAF.

C. YOUR PARAGRAPH 3C: I QUESTION THE WISDOM OF PUTTING POLLING PLACES IN AREAS NOW CONTROLLED BY THE VIET CONG BECAUSE IN THEIR PRESENT MOOD, IT COULD BE THE EQUIVALENT OF A DEATH SENTENCE FOR THE GVN PEOPLE.

D. IN CONNECTION WITH PARAGRAPH 4, I SEE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD AGREE TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE. THE WHOLE TREND IS THE OTHER WAY.

4. I, THEREFORE, DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO "SEEK TO PERSUADE" THIEU AND KY. BUT, OF COURSE, THERE IS NO HARM IN "DISCUSSING" THESE THOUGHTS WITH THEM. I HOPE TO SEE THEM EARLY NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS CAMBODIA AND WILL TAKE SOUNDINGS ON HIS SUBJECT AS WELL.

LODGE
BT

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